

The Newsletter of the National Dragon User's Group

DRAGON



UPDATE

CHAIRMAN: Paul Grade. 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex. BN11-2NF. 01903-207585
EDITOR: Stephen Wood. 52, Downway, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1-5TU.
S/WARE EDITOR: Mike Stott. 10, Mellor Close, Prescott, Merseyside. 0151-480-7712

ISSUE 125 ANOTHER EDITION....JUST!!! JUNE 1999

THE GAFFER'S BIT

Not at all sure that I haven't made a serious error this time ... making this a twelve page issue will probably be enough for some people to decide that they don't need to write anything after all, and that the warnings we gave in the last issue can be ignored. If so, they couldn't be more wrong ... but will they believe that?, somehow I doubt it. Some people simply never believe until it's too late, and even then it's always "someone else's fault". Believe!. Write!.

Just been talking to someone who runs the local "Comprehensive College", you know, one of those places where they boast about how much they have spent on "IT Equipment", and how "understanding IT and computer technology is essential for today's students". So maybe I'm missing a point somewhere, but it seems odd to me that he had to admit that there was no-one at all on the staff who could install a program, let alone an OS, and that he complained that it took the local firm three days sometimes to come out and sort out a machine when it developed the inevitable Windows GPF. It seems fairly safe to assume that if the staff don't know how to deal with simple things like that, there is no way that they can teach the brats to do so in which case, why the Hell are they wasting their time and our money on all these expensive systems?!. Even more to the point, what ARE they teaching?. From what I can find out it seems to consist of "How to use Encarta" and "How to play around looking at assorted Web sites"!. Brilliant!.

That really will give the kids a good grounding in computers!. Funny, I seem to remember, back around 1982 or so, there were thousands of brats (and far older people!) who were into learning how computers actually worked, how to improve them, and even more to the point, how to program the things!, yet at that time most schools would have either not been able to afford machines, or would have considered them to be toys!. I feel sorry for the current "new generation of computer users" it seems that all they are being taught is how to become Good Microsoft Consumers. Shame really, some probably have the ability to learn, if they were given the opportunity ... pity it won't happen.

Oh well, that's progress for you, at least, I think that's what they call it.P.G.

One More, Then No More? ...

Many, many thanks to those who have contributed articles for Update in recent weeks. As a result of these efforts, this issue has been completed and has found its way into your hands.

PLEASE try to come up with some more material in the meantime. We do not have enough to complete the August issue as things stand at the moment, so as you all jet off on holiday, it may be that Update is riding off into the sunset as well. If you have something to ask, or something to say, then say it now, because otherwise you WILL NOT have another chance. Copy deadline is July 10th, plenty of time before the holidays - the alternative is blank pages, which would probably be too much of a strain on Paul's photocopier...

SW

PEEKING THE DRAGON (81) . MIKE STOTT

The time has come round again to write my article and I am getting less and less enthusiastic about it. Very few other people seem to be writing anything for Update nowadays and I am wondering whether anybody is reading what we write as there is no feedback whatsoever. Just in case there is one person reading this I will carry on but it is becoming increasingly difficult to think about what to write.

When I first bought a Dragon computer I religiously kept a catalogue of all my cassettes, cartridges, and disks but this gradually fell by the wayside as I obtained boxes of software with systems that I have purchased over the years.

I am now trying to put this right but I am finding it a very daunting prospect, especially with some of the disks which have very unusual file names.

I have even found that I have got some titles that I have never heard of before.

Also I have got some pieces of software in forms that I did not know existed.

Some of the utilities are proving to be very difficult to work out what they do and I may ask for help with them in future articles if they still give me problems.

One I have found is SADAMS.BIN which I have mentioned before.

I know that it is connected with transferring the Scott Adams adventures from cassette to disk but when I run it nothing seems to happen. I am wondering whether my copy is corrupt or whether I am missing something.

Has anybody got a copy of this program who can tell me what I should be doing with it?

Not many of the programs appear to be corrupted which surprises me after all these years. One that I have not been able to find a working copy of yet is SPIDERMAN which I promised Tim Lees many months ago and none of our readers appears to have a copy.

I have found that I have got many duplicate copies of a lot of titles.

Some of the cassettes I have three or four copies of and I will list them in future articles in case anybody is interested in them.

In work I have always used Dos machines for all my work but due to the Y2K problem I have been forced into having a Pentium II running Windows 98 and I cannot say that I am very happy with it on the whole.

The accountancy package I use is a Dos version which I run from within Windows and I must admit that it is nice to produce reports in an instant instead of having to wait like I did with the old 386.

The spreadsheet I used in the past was SYMPHONY but I am now converting all my files to LOTUS SMARTSUITE which is taking a lot of time.

The hardest thing I am finding with it is in printing out. Windows programs print out as graphics and not text which is fine for making something look nice but what I want is speed not appearance and most of my reports cover many pages which I need to produce on perforated tractor feed paper so that they can be stored in files. There is a bewildering choice of fonts and nothing I have chosen so far has produced a quick draft quality print. Does any of our readers know a way of producing this or is everybody like me a Windows novice?

Due to the upgrading of machines in work we have not got any 5 1/4 inch drives anymore but we had quite a lot of disks which no longer had any use.

I brought them home and have been able to format most of them for use with the Dragon. I am having problems with some of the high density disks which were used as backup disks using PCTOOLS which formats the disks in a different way.

For some reason an error is produced when I try to format them for the Dragon although I have been able to format most of them on my home PC.

In the past when I have had problems formatting disks on the Dragon I have used FLEX first so maybe I will try this when I get time.

Now that Dragon spares are getting in short supply why not try this tip.

Unplug the Dragon leaving it switched on at the back as this is one item that seems to break on a regular basis. I have been doing this for several years now with no adverse effects.

M.S.

Supplying Power to disc drives. Gareth Tuttiett

Once you've decided to get new drives, you may want to fit them in a new drive case. It is possible to buy off the shelf drive boxes - single for external IDE/floppy, multiple (4 or 6) usually for SCSI drives. The power supply unit is fine and usually standard drive power connectors are fitted (larger ones). These can be converted to run drives for the Dragon and I would suggest using such units as it makes life a bit easier.

The dimensions of a particular drive are important when choosing a case. Drives are often talked about in terms of height - full height is 3 2/8" (83mm), but these are rarely seen today except on early PCs; half height is about 1 5/8" (43mm) and about the size of a typical 5.25" drive; and quarter height is approximately 1" (25.4mm) the size of a typical 3.5" drive. Some early 3.5" drive were commonly half height, so ensure the drive bays are the size you want!

Typical dimensions of various drives

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------|
| 5.25" | 1 5/8" x 6 7/8" (43mm x 175mm) |
| 3.5" | 1" x 4" (25.4mm x 101.5mm) |
| | 1 5/8" x 4" (43mm x 101.5mm) |

You may, of course, want to build your own case. However, be warned, as there are some important things to remember. The case should be made of metal and earthed to provide some safety and screening - you could gut the drive cage from an old PC and fit it in a plastic case, but then additional screening would be necessary. It should have ventilation slots or holes around the PSU and use either a switched IEC three pin socket as on the back of the original Dragon drive box or a connector with a mains switch at the front of the unit.

It is possible to use a PC power unit with cooling fan, but the motherboard connectors may have to have a 'loading' otherwise they may not power up (as I found in experiments). On others, the Power Good line may cause problems. This is the route that looks good, but may cause problems - I've decided not to use this method at the moment until I've had more time to work it out.

It does not really matter what type of PSU you use, transformer or switched mode (SMPSU), as long as it has the correct rating for powering drives and provides two voltage levels, +5 and +12 volts. 5.25" drives usually require both, but 3.5" use only +5v (though there are some exceptions). The current is very important: the DC voltage for a drive is +12V +/- 5% at 0.38A typical (0.9A max) and +5v +/- 0.25A typical (0.6A max). The total PSU power output required for two drives should be around 35 watts. For their size, SMPSUs deliver a lot more power.

Don't forget to include overload protection - at least an internal fuse. SMPSUs have their own protection and internal fuse, and also have a built in fan, and transformer PSUs usually have just vents to allow cooling (as with the original Dragon drive box - and pretty large too!). The amount of cooling will depend on the loading applied to the power unit. Floppy drives drain a fair bit a power when being accessed, but remember that they are not in continuous use. Most of the time the drives are on standby and use little power.

Next time - connecting up!

E-MAIL LISTS?

Well, I HAD intended to make a start on the proposed list of member's e-mail addresses etc this month, but so far the response has been pathetic!. I KNOW for a FACT that there are at LEAST FORTY OF YOU out there who regularly use e-mail, so when only FIVE of you take the trouble to give me permission to print their e-mail addresses I have to wonder why the rest are being so secretive. What's up?, embarrassed by being mustapha.nibble@currantbun.com?. Don't be shy!. Paul.

IBM Post Mortem. Sotos Mandalos

Did you know, all you Dragon users, that all mighty IBM has announced another year of PC losses? In fact Merrill Lynch, which is pretty disgusted with IBM's newly revealed \$992 million loss in PCs last year, figures the company could have earned five or seven cents a share more without PCs. It says the fact that IBM "did not earn the cost of capital the past three years is quite damning." The only saving grace it can find is that "at least the assets committed to the PC business have declined from \$2.7 billion in 1996 to \$1.5 billion in 1998 and capital spending needs are small." Merrill would be thrilled if it woke up and found that IBM had turned off its PC factories and outsourced the business.

Meanwhile, after looking at IBM's numbers, both Merrill and Goldman Sachs conclude that software, one of the two legs Blue is standing on, isn't directly dependent on IBM's own hardware. A good thing too considering revenues from servers isn't much to write home about. As a percentage of pre-tax profit, hardware came in at 29%; software and services combined were 65%.

Merrill figures IBM might consider divesting itself of some of the stuff that's lumped under the category "technology." It says "technology is the most capital-intensive business after financing, which means IBM is probably not earning cost of capital in many product lines." Printers, it notes, are already on the block. Technology includes disk drives, semis, networking products and displays as well.

Merill also figures IBM might start financing non-IBM purchases for customers.

Meanwhile, in the wake of IBM's admission that it lost a billion dollars last year on PCs and mounting speculation that it will can the operation in favour of outsourcing, David Thomas, the head of the Personal Systems Group, posted an open letter seeking to reassure everybody that IBM is still a player, determined to return to profitability. Nowhere does he say they'll keep making the darn things. He mouthed the obligatory "I do not condone or excuse our business shortfalls..." but there were still a lot of buts like the price wars, the Asian economic downturn and investments in new distributions models.

It seems a few PC companies have been with their backs against the wall. Only too recently AST Research were bought by big Samsung; they completely tore it apart and now have sold it for peanuts to the founder of Packard Bell. Let's see what he can do!.

There is no presence of AST in Europe anymore. And that kind of breaks my heart, because I spent more than 10 years (a quarter of my life) with this company only to see the big bosses getting paid off with astronomical amounts and for the rest of the workers to getting nothing. But being on a PC market it is a tough business. Dragon Data were in a tough competitive market, with the Commodore 64 and so many others. Where are they now, eh? I say stick to a nice compatible PC and you won't go wrong.

It is a bit ironic that Dragon Data folded with much less loses comparing to IBM. But at least they were smart enough to pull out while they could. I guess that this does not do any justice to the old beasts, the D32 or D64 eh?. I am not that bothered actually, the end was for sometime coming and especially when Dragon User completely vanished and the editor went somewhere else rather speedily (where is she?), then we have had to rely on the Update. A bit poor really, but at least some guys like Paul, Stephen and Mike are focussed and have a plan. The man said it. Let's keep it going until Y2K at least!.

Just a thought, but . . .

What with all of these super-markets getting in on the Freebie ISP act now, I suppose it's a good thing modems work from a cereal port. Personally I'm waiting for the more up-market shops get into the act HarrodsNet sounds so much better than CurrantBun, doesn't it? and at least one would probably be able to phone them and have one's e-mail delivered!. PG.

FREE FOR ALL! . Ray Smith.

The phenomenal success of FREESERVE (one and a half million users as I write and 7000 or more a week joining up!) has had a profound effect on the rest of the Internet Service Providers in the UK. The reverberations are still going on and will be for some time yet, but how has it affected you and me, the users at the end of the line?

It has had three very noticeable effects so far. Firstly it has brought the 'Net into the reach of most people and has seen a surge in interest. Secondly it has caused a great many of the ISPs to rethink their policies, with the result that some of them now offer their services free, while others have reduced their charges. Thirdly it has made it difficult and sometimes impossible to get on line through Freeserve during evenings and weekends, when calls are cheaper. *(They have now rectified this problem. PG.)*

I, for one, have had to resort to signing on briefly in the morning at premium phone rates, just to check my e-mail. As for the weekend - forget it!

The result is that I have looked around for an ISP offering free services that you can connect to without too much hassle and one which provides something more than a minimum connection.

Most free ISPs are taking a tiny percentage of your phone call charges and boosting their revenue in other ways. Some do it by blatant advertising and X-STREAM comes to mind in this context as when you log on to the 'Net through them you are presented with a banner advertisement across the top of every page. Some are into e-commerce in a big way and sell all sorts of articles through their pages, while others are content to receive a tiny amount every time you click on a link on one of their pages and you are diverted to a commercial web site elsewhere on the 'Net.

In the course of all this meandering around the 'Net I have learned a lot and found numbers of ISPs providing free services and more seem to be jumping on the band wagon every week. Here is a list of some of the ISPs which are providing free services at the end of March. All of them provide access via a local call (either 0345 or 0845) and in fact there are several others that I know of, but for one reason or another I could not contact them this weekend - apart from SCOT-FREE.NET which I rather fancy, but although it has a page up, has a notice that it will not be operating until Spring 1999!

| Name of ISP | Contact Number or address for CD | Web address http://www. to start | E-mail | Webpace | Support No and cost if known |
|-------------|--|--|--------|---------|------------------------------------|
|-------------|--|--|--------|---------|------------------------------------|

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------|-------|------------|
| Athene Internet (FREENET) | sales@freenet. uk.com Fast access, minimal content. | freenet.co. uk | un/ltd | 10 mb | 50p p.min. |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------|-------|------------|

| | | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|---------------------------|
| ARSENAL FC | 0171 704 2020 or collect CD | arsenal.co. uk | ? | ? | 0906 553 5209 £1 pm |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|---------------------------|

| | | | | | |
|--------|---------------|------------|-----|---|---|
| BIGWIG | 0870 740 1033 | bigwig.net | Yes | ? | ? |
|--------|---------------|------------|-----|---|---|

Having problems when I connected - many users unable to browse 'Net or collect e-mail. They say things should be sorted out by April 1999.

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| BREATHNET (ToysRUs) | 0800 500 150 | timeto breathe.net | 5xPop3 | 10 mb | £1 pm |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------|-------|-------|

(This site was still under construction when I visited)

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|----|---|
| BTCLICKFREE | 0800 731 7887 | btclickfree. com | from Talk21 | no | ? |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|----|---|

Until recently charged an extra 1p over local call rate, but now free

CALLNET 0870 010 2979 callnetuk. un/ltd 20 mb 0870 line
com ?£1.pm??

Fast access and the content looks on a par with Freeserve)

CONNECT FREE 0870 742 1111 connectfree. un/ltd soon 0870 line
co.uk POP3 50p pm

They boast - a first time connection every time - always 30% over capacity. Certainly a fast connection.

FANTASTIC MEDIA info@ukf.co.uk ukfantastic. un/ltd 5mb 0906 call
net £1 pm

Sign up on-line. At present limited to first 200 callers a day.)

FREE-ONLINE 0870 706 0510 free-online. 5xPop3 un/ltd 0890 99 88
for CD net 776

Operates in partnership with Yorkshire Cable) 49p peak 39p offpk

FREE4ALL 01303 775500 free4all. Pop3 10 mb on a 0845
co.uk free no

About average - local access number 0845 300 3150

FREEUK 0900 9000 900 freeuk.com Un/ltd 25 mb Not known
Operated by MESH Computers - seems quite a reasonable server

INTERNET ALLIANCE 0800 052 0523 iax.net Un/ltd ?? 0890 line
You can signup 49p peak
EXCHANGE on the phone 39p off pk
Reasonable access.

LINEONE 0800 111 210 lineone.net 5xPop3 Un/ltd 0906 3020
Reasonable access - millions of pages of content online) 100 50ppm
Local access number 0845 079 6699)

SOFTWARE WAREHOUSE 0870 729 4444 softnetfree. un/ltd 10mb 0870 or
CD costs £3.00 co.uk 0890 call
(SOFTNET) for post etc 60ppm
Both fast and impressive, though it has had software problems in past.

TESCO Pick up a CD tesco.net ? ? 0890 call
for 50p - but you must have a saver card. 49p peak
Good site - lots of info, shopping etc. So much I couldn't find the details of e-mail and web pages without spending a lot of time online.

X-STREAM NETWORK 0870 730 6466 x-stream.com Pop3 20mb not known

Very commercial site. Web pages are on a specialised website community
At present offering free calls on an 0800 number at week ends.

Since writing the above only a day ago, I now find that VIRGIN.NET is going free for existing customers from April 1st and for new subscribers from May 1st and advertising in the Daily Mail today is yet another new free ISP, IN2HOME.NET, which is an associated company of Scottish Telecom. Everyone is jumping on the band wagon!. If you happen to be on cable, there may be a problem with support lines which use a 0906 number. I could not connect to the LINEONE support number and they told me that people on cable could not get through to that number by phone - whether it is just the LINEONE number which is affected, or all 0906 numbers, I can't say. RS

64 Columns . . . Keith Redhead

Undeniably, the Dragon's text screen display has always been its weakest point, even in its by now almost forgotten heyday. Nowadays, of course, comparison between the original unimproved format and those of the plethora of computers available on the market must make even the most dedicated of Dragon users and defenders feel distinctly embarrassed and short-changed.

At the heart of the problem, of course, is the 6847 video display chip which Dragon Data decided to use in the machine, presumably in order to make it as compatible as possible with the Tandy Colour Computer on which it was based. Whether the amount and quality of CoCo software available at the time of the Dragon's inception and the degree of ease with which it could be converted justified this approach I'm not able to say. However, the fact remains that the Dragon, one of the best computers around when first brought out and even today still remarkably good for program development purposes, was badly let down by its original 32x16 display.

Nevertheless, the situation has been remedied over the years to a greater or lesser degree. Compusense's PLUS-Board was, as far as I'm aware, the only hardware modification produced, and its on-board 6845 chip greatly enhanced the machine with a very professional looking 80x24 display. I've always regretted that I wasn't able to afford one when they were available. On the other hand, programmers both professional and amateur have tackled the limitations of the 6847 chip and produced a number of alternative software solutions to the problem. One of the best of these, in my opinion, appeared in the December 1987 issue of Dragon User. Written by Paul Harrison, it turned the Dragon into a true graphics machine and probably took the 6847 chip to its limits by enabling text and graphics to be freely mixed and providing a 64x27 text display with lower case, the maximum achievable whilst still maintaining reasonable clarity given the limitations of the 256x192 hi res screen. Other features include a visible cursor which can be turned off if required, together with control codes for non-destructive backspace and forward space, inverse text and screen scrolling without affecting the cursor position, as well as the usual Dragon control for delete and carriage return/line feed. The program also provides facilities for machine code programmers to increase the number of codes. In addition, a separate utility is listed which allows the user to redefine characters, though I've never got around to typing this in yet.

The program listing as it appeared in Dragon User was reproduced in rather small and close-packed print, and I was obliged to get it enlarged on a photocopier before I could type it in. This took me quite a while, but it was well worth the effort. Certain BASIC instructions no longer work and have been replaced with new ones, but once the user is familiar with these and the control codes, the utility is a joy to use. The character set is clear and easy to read, and the keyboard response is excellent, never missing a keystroke. After loading, approximately 20K is available to the user.

As originally written, the program was incompatible with disks, but this was soon remedied with a patch by Harvey Grey which appeared in the July 1988 issue of Dragon User. Owing to a misprint, I couldn't get it to work at first, but a phone call to Harvey6 soon put matters right. For those of you who tried the patch without success, the correct listing is:

```
POKE &H807,&H0C POKE &H7875,&H0C POKE &H787E,&H23 POKE &H788, &H0C
POKE &H78EC, &H0C POKE &H78F4, &H0C
```

When run, there is a short delay while the character set is loaded. The full set is then displayed. Pressing any key clears the screen ready for use. As first implemented, the utility gives white on black printing which I don't like, so I have the inverse command permanently set to enable the more usual black on white, which is much clearer to read. As for any further development, the addition of a patch to provide windows would really be the icing on the cake, if anyone can do it!

Page eight

Final verdict? Well, let's face it, only hardware modifications will ever put the Dragon's display on a level even remotely comparable with today's machines. The obvious solution would be to replace the 6847 chip with a 6845 but this is apparently very difficult to do and unless someone is able to overcome the problems involved it ain't going to happen. In the meantime, software solutions remain the only viable means, and I thoroughly recommend 64-COL. If you haven't got the relevant issues of Dragon User or can't face all the typing involved, phone me on 0191 273 1245 and I'll send you a copy.

In Defence Of Sexism...

Re the item on women in computers. As far as insulting women is concerned, the 'offending item' raised a good laugh from my female friends. I have trained many women to use and troubleshoot PCs and they have ALL done very well, which is more than can be said of the men I've worked with. Why oh why do so many men have to have ego trouble and can't say when they are stuck! Women, in my experience, do seem to remember things better. But then, they have always had a good reason to learn computers, that is a relevant use for a computer - a practical use. Men play games. Over simplifying? Classic situation: a couple say "we must have a computer for our children to use and help them with their school work...etc". If the woman goes out to buy, she finds out what the school uses, where a home computer can help, and does the required homework and does not take a salesperson's word for it. Buys computer for children and learns herself. However, if the man goes out with the same intention, he brings back a computer that the salesperson said was the best and the children don't get a look in as man has to play Tomb Raider one more time...the Train Set Syndrome. Gareth Tuttiett.

Emulate Me...

Before we all go our separate ways, I have one last request to make, and I'm sorry if I have inadvertently missed it; could somebody PLEASE explain, in words of simple plain English, how to use the PC/Dragon emulators, two of which I have had for ages but without the necessary intelligence/luck to get them to work. J.S.Mitchell.

Public Service Announcement

Here's a friendly tip for anyone out there who experiences the joys - yes, the joys - of network management and trying to figure out ways of getting round the incompetence of other people...

If you're playing to run some form of digital video capture software, for example Radius MotoDV, on a Macintosh system, and you also have a network management package along the lines of MacAdministrator, please note: the actual capture of material in MotoDV will be unacceptably jittery and essentially useless unless you switch off AppleTalk beforehand - which more or less makes the idea of having a network a bit pointless, no? Also, remember that when you switch AppleTalk back on, it defaults to the printer port to look for the network, rather than the Ethernet connection.

Furthermore, unless you have the SCSI 3 connections and/or a wideSCSI accelerator, the playback of already-captured material will be too slow and too painful to watch. Trust me, I know...from bitter experience.

On the plus side, though, MotoDV seems quite happy with system 7.5.3, despite protestations from the manual claiming that only 7.6.1 or greater will do...

SW

Odds 'n Sods

Well, as I said earlier, I have intended to include a list of member's e-mail addresses and similar useful things in this issue, but as only five of you have bothered to give me permission to publish theirs so far I reckon I'd better leave that item until the next issue (always supposing that Stephen gets enough material in for us to make up a next issue!), and hope that a few more of you will have overcome your shyness by that time. Still, as there does seem to be some interest in the subject of e-mail generally I suppose I might as well try to come up with SOMETHING useful on that topic. I think it would be safe to assume that most people using e-mail do so via Internet Explorer (in one variant or another) and Outlook Express or its predecessor. If you are one of those who do, have you noticed that your drive space seems to be shrinking, even though you have scrupulously deleted all your out of date IE/OE files regularly?. If so, try having a closer look at your IE4 installation!. If you are using the Win 3.11 version of IE4.01, take a look at the content of the CACHE directory.... bloody frightening!!. You can quite safely delete the lot, in fact an extra line in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file to do the job automatically whenever you fire up your machine can save acres of wasted drive space!. Of course, you delete your old e-mails, and probably even delete the "deleted items" stuff occasionally too, I'm sure, but there's still another full copy of everything in and out sitting around filling up your drive as well have a look at the sub-directories in the IE4\PROFILES\USER1 directory ADDRBOOK, MAIL & NEWS. If you use EDIT and delete everything *except the first line* in every .MBX file in these three sub-directories you'll get back a lot of wasted space and OE and IE4 will quite happily "repair" the files when next you run the programs!. So OK, the directory names are different in the Win95 and earlier Win 3.11 versions, but they are easy enough to find and clean up using the same methods. Yes, I DO know that you can set up IE to delete redundant files, but it only makes a VERY superficial job of it, so if your 6.2 Gig drive has shrunk to a 2.1 Gig over the weekend, why not take a look!?. By the way, Windows, especially 95, has a disgusting habit of "hiding" files, especially ones that use acres of space, and refusing to allow you to change the attributes but if you make up a standard DOS system disc which includes the DOS "ATTRIB" command and boot your machine up on that occasionally, then use ATTRIB/S -h c:*.* (or whatever your Windows drive happens to be), the results can be quite a revelation!. All good clean fun!.

One last (I hope) item on the subject if anyone else still prefers to use Win 3.11 rather than 95/98, and can't find a Freebie ISP which actually provides a 3.11 version of Explorer and Outlook, problem is now solved! someone at TescoNet realised that not everyone is into 95, and included a 3.x version on their TescoNet CD. Nice move by whoever it was!. The CD costs you an extortionate fifty pence, and you have to be in the club, (well, you need one of their Club Cards so I suppose that's what they mean!) to 'buy' a copy, but it's worth the price!. TescoNet operates on an 0845 number, and provides the usual e-mail addresses, web space, etc, and the software seems to install and run happily enough (by the way, you need the number of your club card to register when you sign up with them). I was wondering if anyone on the "freebie" ISP scene would ever get enough sense to realise that a lot of people are allergic to 95!. Finally someone has!.

Completely off the subject, but does anyone know why the majority of firms in the UK seem to take at least a month to deliver even small items ordered from them, and then want to charge a minor fortune for delivery on top of the already extortionate price?. Reason for asking is that last week Ken ordered a program from a relatively small company in the States the price was \$39 (same price as in the USA) and there was NO extra charge for airmail delivery, and it arrived five days after the order was placed!. Last time I ordered anything similar in the UK it was from a London firm, took almost five weeks to arrive (incomplete) and cost a fiver extra "carriage"!. Makes you think we're being got at, doesn't it?. Much as I dislike having to say anything good about Our Colony in the Americas, they do seem to have developed more efficient business methods!. P.G.

The Late, Late, Bit

Don't think you can relax again just because this issue is back to the twelve page level!. This was achieved solely because half a dozen members got the message last time around and decided to DO something about it like writing some material for us. That does NOT mean that you can expect the same few to do so again for the next issue it's YOUR TURN!. Stephen has managed to hold a couple of the contributions over, in order that we will have at least one double sided page to send out in August, and as you will have noticed, we've "padded" this issue to make up for this hence my additional page of drivel, but unless you really DO want the August issue to be a single sheet of A4, get writing, NOW!. I kid you not.

Dragon news? if there's been any I seem to have missed out on it. I'm still waiting for Stewart Orchard to finalise his modifications to the Emulator disc so we can offer you a version that actually has disc reading capability, but I've heard nothing from him about how its progressing recently, so release date is still "sometime in the future" (sounds a bit like Microsoft, doesn't it?!). And on the subject of Emulators, if one of the many users would care to note the plea elsewhere in this issue and write us a few words of simple explanation on how to get them up and running it really would help some of our less "expert" members ... go on, demonstrate your expertise and altruism and give us something useful and interesting to print at the same time!!. A couple of dozen lines won't take you THAT long to write, surely?. You could do that at work without anyone noticing!. (Well, I know that if anyone saw you actually appearing to work they might be suspicious, but live dangerously, give it a try!).

What else? damned if I know really it's getting too dangerous to have a go at politicians, I mean, look what happened when Serbian television criticised the White House Flasher!, Worthing Council would never forgive me if NATO turned up and bombed the pier (a legitimate military target, of course), although so far as I'm concerned it would be a damned good idea never did like that pier anyway. Actually, it probably wouldn't be THAT dangerous, after all, with Yanks doing most of the bombing all I'd need to do would be paint a large target on the roof of Schloss Grade and they'd never hit it in a million years!. Don't know about you, but I'm sick and tired of hearing politicians every time I turn on a radio, and even worse, seeing the morons whenever I turn on the television I reckon we ought to be able to claim it as political persecution, or at very least obscene publication!. With all their claims about this being a "democratic country" I think there ought to be an extra choice on all voting forms, one marked "nobody" ... any bets that Nobody would win every election with an overwhelming majority?.

And on the subject of total prats have you noticed the number of firms and particularly "official bodies" like councils, schools, etc, that are frantically dumping perfectly good 486 and early Pentium systems and replacing them with "Millennium Compliant" ones? some are even PAYING to have the things taken away as scrap!. Funny thing about it is that I've tried quite a few of these "old" machines recently, and without exception they have all been able to cope with the Dreaded Y2K Bug perfectly no patches, no modifications needed!. For some reason it never seemed to occur to the idiots who ordered them dumped that there was no problem with the Hardware at all the problem was with their software/OS, which most have happily transferred to their nice new expensive replacement systems!. Ain't life fun?!

And mention of computers again reminds me ... Mike is complaining about having to use 98 at work now, and the lousy Windows printing speed. Sorry Mike, but if there's a way of making 95/98 print out faster I haven't discovered it yet ... best you do is change the settings to the lowest print resolution available, it helps a bit, but not much. As to the P2 running 98 to avoid the Dreaded Bug ... hope the firm has downloaded all the latest patches from Microsoft.com, or they could get a nasty shock at the end of the year!. 98 ain't bug free either!. (For that matter, nor are all of the patches, but they are alleged to help). Paul G.

GROUP ADVERTISING PAGES

SUTCLIFFE ELECTRONICS

LETTER WRITER UTILITY PROGRAM NOW FREE!. JUST SEND A DONATION TO COVER COSTS!.
BASIC 42 FOR DOS V1.0 OR E6 ALSO AVAILABLE, SMALL CHARGE FOR PHOTOCOPYING MANUALS.
QUERIES AND ORDERS TO: J.SUTCLIFFE, 15, WEST STREET, HOTHFIELD, ASHFORD, KENT.

UP-2-DATE COMPILATION DISCS

THE UP-2-DATE COMPILATION DISCS ARE STILL AVAILABLE!. DISC 1: MAINLY DUMPS FOR EPSON PRINTERS AND INCLUDES THE ABILITY TO PROCESS COMPRESSED GRAPHICS. DISC 2: COLLECTION OF UP-2-DATE "SHOWCASE" PROGRAMS. DISC 3: COLLECTION OF GRAPHICS PROGRAMS, MANIPULATORS, EDITORS, CREATORS, ETC. DISC 4: HUGE COLLECTION OF COMPRESSED GRAPHICS, PLUS "PAKKER" PROGRAM FOR COMP./DECOMPRESSING. *PRICE IS £3.50 INCLUSIVE PER DISC, FULL SET OF FOUR FOR JUST £12.00.* AVAILABLE FROM RAY SMITH, 5, GLEN ROAD, PARKSTONE, POOLE, DORSET. CHEQUES PAYABLE TO N.D.U.G.

THE DRAGON PD LIBRARY

A FULL LIST OF AVAILABLE SOFTWARE CAN NOW BE OBTAINED FROM THE PD LIBRARY.

(SAE WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED).

ALL ORDERS AND ENQUIRIES TO: KEITH NASH, 16 LANSDOWNE STREET, WORCESTER WR1-1QD.

YOU WANTED IT BACK --- SO MAKE FULL USE OF IT!.

DRAGON SCARED OF MICE?!

D64 MOUSE DRIVER SOFTWARE, ALL YOU NEED TO RUN A STOCK PC TYPE MOUSE WITH YOUR D64 ON ONE 5.25" DISC FOR A MERE £3.00 INCLUSIVE. IT JUST HAS TO BE A BARGAIN!

CHEQUES PAYABLE TO THE GROUP TO PAUL GRADE, PLEASE.

DRAGON 64 SERIAL PORT TO 9 PIN "D" SERIAL MOUSE PLUG ADAPTOR LEAD, READY MADE AND READY TO USE. MADE AND SUPPLIED (AT MATERIALS COST ONLY!) BY STEWART ORCHARD FOR JUST £3.00 INCLUSIVE.

CHEQUES PAYABLE TO STEWART ORCHARD, PLEASE, TO STEWART AT

4 EASTERN CLOSE, CAISTER-ON-SEA, Gt. YARMOUTH, NORFOLK. NR30-5HT.

STILL WANTED

INTERESTED IN OBTAINING THE FOLLOWING: DRAGON PLUS BOARD (Compusense one) OR A DRAGON 64 ALREADY EQUIPED WITH ONE. DRAGON UPDATE ISSUES 5 & 20 (I ACTUALLY NEED A CLEAR COPY OF THE OS9 ARTICLE ON PAGE 5 ISSUE 20) OR COPIES OF SAME. IF YOU HAVE SUCH ITEMS OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOES, PLEASE CONTACT ME. I WILL COVER REASONABLE COSTS. SPENCER DAVIES, 49 HOOKS HALL DRIVE, DAGENHAM, ESSEX. RM10-7BD.

SOFTWARE SALE!!

EX-P.S.E SOFTWARE STOCK FOR SALE, NOW AT EVEN LOWER PRICES!. NOW IS YOUR CHANCE TO BUY THOSE PROGRAMS YOU WERE ALWAYS "GOING TO" BUT NEVER DID, AT BARGAIN PRICES!. FAR TOO MANY TITLES TO LIST HERE, SO SEND ME A S.A.E FOR FULL LIST.

SOME HARDWARE BITS AND PIECES ALSO AVAILABLE.

TIM LEES. 83 HARWOOD VALE, HARWOOD, BOLTON, LANCs. BL2-3QX.

WANTED!

DRAGON HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, PERIPHERALS, BOOKS, MAGAZINES WANTED ... ANYTHING CONNECTED WITH THE DRAGON!. PLEASE SEND DETAILS TO:

I.REHMAN, 128 CARR ROAD, NELSON, LANCs. BB9-7ST. (01282-447351).

NOTHING TO BUY OR SELL?

THERE SEEMS TO BE A MARKED SHORTAGE OF ADVERTS THIS MONTH WHAT'S UP?, DON'T NEED ANYTHING?, NOTHING TO GET RID OF?. AFTER ALL, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DRAGON RELATED ... ADVERTISE THE BRATS OR YOUR MOTHER-IN LAW IF YOU THINK THERE'S A CHANCE ANYONE WOULD BUY THEM!. I DON'T CARE!. DON'T FORGET ADVERTISING COSTS YOU NOTHING AT ALL IN UPDATE, JUST DRAFT OUT AN AD AND SEND IT IN TO PAUL GRADE.

NEW LOW PRICES! .

DRAGON 64 MOUSE DRIVER DISC. £3.00
 EZEE ADVENTURE WRITER UTILITY £2.00
 EZEE M/C TUTORIAL DISCS 1&2 (ech) £2.00
 R.A.D FUN DISC (24 progs) now £2.00
 R.A.D ANITUNES (music & pix) £2.00
 R.A.D BEST OF INPUT LISTINGS £2.00
 DISC EDITOR UTILITY £2.00
 DRAGON/COCO DISC CONVERTER now £2.00
 COCO/DRAGON DISC CONVERTER now £2.00
 DRAWEZEE GRAPHICS UTILITY(T orD) £2.00
 NDUG FORTH OS & ASSEMBLER now £3.00
 LOTTERY NUMBER GENERATOR now £1.00
 AMATEUR RADIO UTILITIES(2 discs) £3.00
 DAVE CADMAN'S POETRY DISC now £2.00
 EINE KLEINE NACHMUSIK DISC now £2.00
 DISC UTILITIES COLLECTION No2. £2.00
 RANDISK EXTRA DISC now £2.00
 NEWCOPY TAPE COPY UTILITY(T) £2.00
 GRAHAM KINNS SHAREWARE DISC £2.00

DRAGON 32 & 64 CIRCUIT SHEETS £1.00
 DRAGON/COCO/CUMANA DOS SHEETS £0.75
 D32 TO 64k UPGRADE MANUAL £1.50
 HELPLINE LIST (volunteers needed!)
 DRAGON MUSIC-QUIZ DISC. now £2.00
 DRAGON SUPER QUIZ DISC. now £2.00
 TETRIS.(PAYNEFORTH VERSION) £2.00
PC/DRAGON EMULATORS. THREE PROGRAMS
TO RUN DRAGON/COCO SOFTWARE ON YOUR
PC. ONLY £3.50 THE SET!.. AVAILABLE
IN ANY PC DISC FORMAT).. ONLY £3.50!
ALL NEW VERSIONS!.. BETTER & FASTER!

 ALL CHEQUES & ORDERS TO PAUL GRADE.
 AT 6, NAVARINO ROAD, WORTHING, SUSSEX.
 CHEQUES PAYABLE TO N.D.U.G. PLEASE.

 ROTABB £2.50
 BALLDOZER £2.50

THE DRAGONART GRAPHICS LIBRARY

CONTAINS THE BIGGEST SELECTION OF DRAGON GRAPHICS SCREENS ANYWHERE!, PLUS A LARGE SELECTION OF MAINLY GRAPHICS RELATED UTILITIES, SCREEN DUMPS, ETC.. ALL AVAILABLE TO YOU AT A SMALL NOMINAL CHARGE. FOR FULL DETAILS AND LISTS WRITE TO THE LIBRARIAN, 5, GLEN ROAD, PARKSTONE, POOLE, DORSET. (enclosing s.a.e please).

DRAGON NOTEBOOK

HUNDREDS OF USEFUL HINTS AND TIPS ESSENTIAL READING FOR ALL DRAGON USERS.
 JUST £3.00 FROM THE DRAGONART LIBRARY AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

UP-2-DATE DISC MAGAZINE

THE BI-MONTHLY DISC MAGAZINE FOR ALL DRAGON USERS (ALTERNATES WITH UPDATE). STILL ONLY £2.00 PER COPY AND ALMOST AS GOOD AS UPDATE!!.. IF YOU HAVE A DRAGON YOU MUST HAVE AN UP-2-DATE SUBSCRIPTION!. ORDER NOW FROM:-

UP-2-DATE EDITOR. 5, GLEN ROAD, PARKSTONE, POOLE, DORSET. CHEQUES PAYABLE N.D.U.G

D.T.P. FOR THE DRAGON

THE GROUP DESKTOP SYSTEM, IN DRAGON OR COCO DOS VERSIONS, WITH DOZENS OF FONTS AND FORMATS, AND HUNDREDS OF USES!. AVAILABLE ONLY FROM THE DRAGONART LIBRARY.

CONTACT THE LIBRARIAN FOR FULL DETAILS AND VERSIONS AVAILABLE.

UPDATE BACK ISSUES

Reprinted to order at just 7 pence per side copied. (average cost still only 98P per issue inclusive.). Please send your cheques & orders to:

ALAN GREENWOOD, 132, WENDOVER DRIVE, ASPLEY, NOTTS.NG8-5JN.

DRAGSOFT SHAREWARE.

"DATA MAKER", TURNS M/S INTO DATA FOR BASIC PROGS. "SETTER" ADJUST YOUR DRAGON FOR BETTER COLOUR AND SOUND. "SLOW BUT SURE" EPSON SCREEN DUMPS .. EXTRA SMALL TO A4 .. ALL 5 HI-RES, LOW-RES, AND TEXT. ALL NOW AT £2.00 EACH PLUS A SMALL DONATION TO BE SENT TO N.D.U.G FUNDS. PLEASE STATE DRAGONDOS DISC OR TAPE.

CHEQUES/PO'S MADE PAYABLE TO:-

MIKE TOWNSEND, Basement Flat, 46, HEWLETT ROAD, CHELTENHAM. GL52-6AE.

PRINTER FOR SALE

SURPLUS TO NEEDS. MANNESMANN TALLY SPIRIT 80 DOT MATRIX PRINTER (9 PIN, 80 COLUMN). IN EXCELLENT CONDITION, FULLY WORKING AND COMPLETE WITH TWO NEW SPARE RIBBONS, THE ORIGINAL MANUALS, AND DUST COVER. A BARGAIN AT £20.00 (CARRIAGE NEGOTIABLE.). PLEASE TELEPHONE GARETH TUTTIETT ON: 01458-445684.
